Dear Jerry, 10/25/91

We've just finished talking and in the few moments before Lil will be ready for our weekly baked-fish Friday supper I picked up Thomas Harris' "Red Dragon" to begin it. I did not get to the first page before I was reminded. ...

He quotes Blake poetry and has this note, that after Blake's death one of the poems was found with prints from plates. That reminded me of some print we have from plates.

In time they will show up. Unless there is an interest in having them earlier. If there is we'd have to talk to Lil. They are hers. If not literally then so far as I am concerned.

The story of how we got them, a fragment of our past and a little known part of it.

Although we never finished the house I was building at our farm, we entertained quite a few people in the basement in which we lived until we moved here. I'd had to spend most of my time building the chicken houses, which I did, ranging from the concrete work to the wiring and plumbing. The basement was more than half out of the ground, bright and airy, only the bathroom window less than five feet wide.

Our birds were well known, and so was Lil's cooking. When Elinor Lee was the Post's food editor she wrote about Lil and her cooking several times. She loved us. Lil ~~She~~ has a pair of staghorn poultry shears, one of Lee's gifts.

Paul Herron was a reporter who was made editor of the Post's Sunday ~~first~~ magazine. It was titled Potomac. Forerunner of the present Sunday magazine.

Paul had an idea to bring some of his friends up, including a chef, for a fair sample of Lil's cooking. The chef, who I'd met when he worked elsewhere, was Bertil Swanquist, of the Metropolitan Club. Tom ~~The~~ Stevenson was the Post's garden editor. Then there was the friend of Paul's ~~one~~, Don Swann, of Alexandria. He and Herron'brought ~~brofuth~~ their wives, both previously unknown to us.

Lil had eight different chicken preparations and they raved about all of them. Only the chef was a bit embarrassed when he learned that in one that he'd liked Lil had actually used chocolate. (I'd probably have been uneasy about tasting it it I'd known!)

Swann's father was a famous Alexandria etcher. He brought Lil a fine set of his father's etchings, all of Old Alexandria.

We had no space at the farm for them on any walls and we have the same problem if to a lesser degree here. We have a great nephew who has serious health problems from an accident and who stays very busy, as a good father should, with his boys. But when he learned about it and saw the etchings he measured them and said he would get plexiglas for them to be encased within. He hasn't. And Lil still has them carefully in the bottom of a drawer someplace.

Quite aside from the possible value these have, and when we were broke we never gave any thought to ~~sel~~ selling them, they are beautiful and perhaps as a collection a bit rare.

So, this is so that Hood will have a record of something squirreled away.

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